

31. MASSIVE OCCURRENCE OF *ENHYDRA FLUCTUANS* LOUR.  
(*ENYDRA*) IN CITY POND

(With a text-figure)

The Bandra pond and its vegetation attracted our attention about 10 months ago when a curious citizen brought a strange plant for identification. Unfortunately, the plant was in sterile condition at that time, and as it was novel to Bombay and Maharashtra, it kept us guessing about its identity, till very recently when we were able to collect it in bloom and ascertain its identity after critical study.

Bandra pond, which was famous for the eye-catching *Lotus* flowers till few years ago, now nourishes the growth of unwanted weeds which has been a cause of concern to local inhabitants and naturalists. With this point in mind a study of vegetation of this pond was undertaken as a project work for the undergraduate students.

The critical study on the plant revealed that it is a member of Compositae, *Enhydra fluctuans* Lour. This species has been earlier reported from West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Northern India. It is not included either in Cooke's Flora of Bombay Presidency or in Flora of Madras Presidency by Gamble. However, it has been reported from present Maharashtra state by Karthikeyan *et al.* in Records Bot. Surv. India 21(2): 169. 1981, without mentioning any precise locality. After enquiring with Mr. Karthikeyan about the occurrence of this species in Maharashtra, it is revealed that he has reported this species based on Paradkar-43, collected on 15-3-1963 from Nagpur College premises. Mr. Karthikeyan further states in his letter that before publication of his paper, he saw the specimen in the Herbarium of Botanical Survey of India, Western Circle, Poona (BSI), but subsequent-

ly the specimen has been misplaced by somebody, and he could get only the reference card. From this information it appears that this is a new report of this species from Maharashtra. Since it is an addition to Cooke's Flora and Madras Flora and since there is no figure available for this species, we give below the full details of the plant with line drawings.

A decumbent, branched, fleshy, submerged aquatic herb rooting at nodes. Roots long, unbranched, stout and cylindrical. Stem rounded, cylindrical with long internodes, fleshy, hollow in the centre, purple at the nodes, with scattered white hairs when young. Leaves simple, opposite, linear-oblong, fleshy, gland-dotted, distantly short-toothed, acute at the apex, sessile, with a prominent midrib, glabrous. Inflorescence terminal and axillary, sessile, rounded head surrounded by leafy, involucre bracts. Bracts in 2 whorls, persistent; outer 2 bracts ovate-oblong, 1-1.5 cm long, 0.6-0.8 cm broad, rounded at base, slightly narrowing and acute at the apex, 4-6 veined, gland-dotted in the upper half, glabrous. Inner bracts 2, broadly ovate, 0.5 cm broad, green, 4-6 veined, rounded at base and apex, fleshy, glabrous. Head heterogamous-rayed Florets arranged centripetally on a fleshy, rounded to concave receptacle. Ray florets (pistillate florets) at the periphery, arranged in many series. Ovary oblong, white, 0.4-0.45 cm long, 0.1-0.2 cm broad, white flat on upper surface, compressed and 2 sided on the lower surface; ovule 0.1 cm long, erect, shining. Style slender, 0.2-0.3 cm long, linear; stigma deeply 2 fid, exerted, curved inwards, slightly coloured. Palea long, covering the ovary, hairy at the apex; hairs

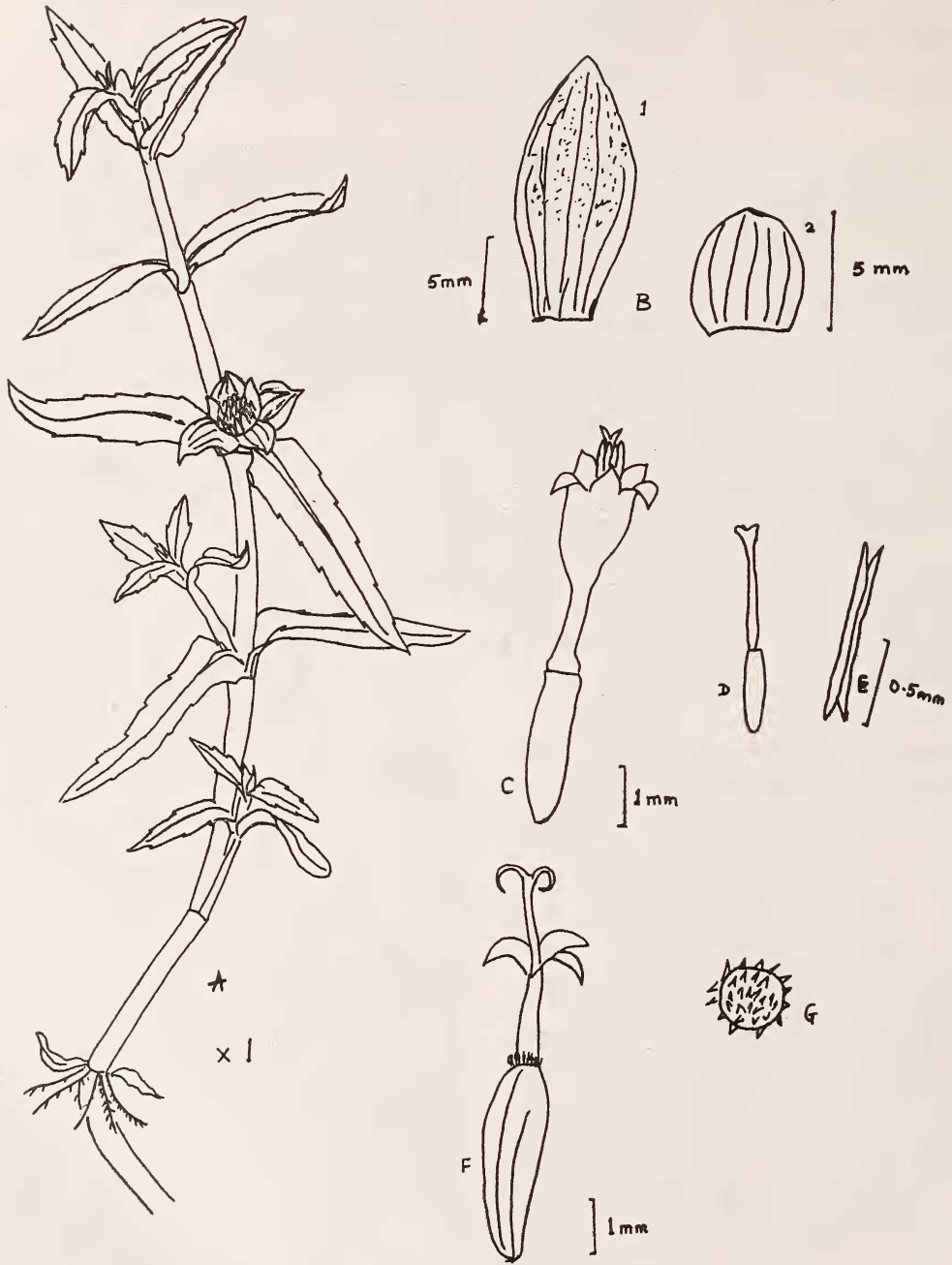


Fig. 1. *Enhydra fluctuans* Lour.

A. Habit; B. 1. Outer bract, 2. Inner bract; C. Disc floret; D. Pistil; E. Anther; F. Ray floret; G. Pollen.